



M E D I A R E L E A S E

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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TENNESSEE'S ADOPTIONS AT HIGHEST LEVEL EVER

More than 1,200 children move from state custody to 'forever homes'

NASHVILLE – The Tennessee Department of Children's Services this year has seen more youth adopted out of state custody than any time in its history.

For federal fiscal year ending in September, 1,217 children were taken in by adoptive families. Rather than continuing as essentially legal orphans in state care, these children now have the opportunity to grow up as members of a family.

"We're celebrating a remarkable achievement that signals a brighter and more loving future for 1,217 children," said Tennessee Gov. Phil Bredesen.

"Every child deserves to grow up in a family that loves them unconditionally," said Dr. Viola P. Miller, Tennessee's DCS commissioner. "Now more Tennessee children have the opportunity for the permanency they need."

Last federal fiscal year, Tennessee finalized 1,014 adoptions compared to 195 adoptions 10 years ago (FY96-97).

The good news about the adoptions parallels more good news about the number of children in state custody. The number of children in custody is now about 8,300, down 1,500 from this time last year.

Not only is the department finding adoptive homes for children, it is also using new programs that help relatives take care of children who might have otherwise been in foster care.

Even with these successes, there is still plenty of work remaining: More than 300 children in state custody still need an adoptive home. More information is available at www.state.tn.us/youth.